

# Sheriff seeks safe place for police shooting range

By AARON ALDRIDGE  
Staff Writer

Law enforcement personnel in Sullivan County have no place to qualify with their weapons and the sheriff has proposed a plan to remedy the situation.

**Newport** "There just isn't a place to go where we can safely train," Sheriff Mike Prozzo said during the county commissioner's meeting Tuesday.

Prozzo asked the commissioners if his department could use a piece of property at the Sullivan County Complex to construct a new gun range that would be used exclusively by law enforcement.

"My objective is to find a safe place within the county," Prozzo said. "We just don't have any place we can do it."

The only viable range where police could train in the county was the Ruger Range on Route 10 in Newport, but according to Prozzo, that range is no longer available.

Prozzo said he has spoken with all the police chiefs in the county and they are 100 percent behind his proposal.

"There are probably 150 law enforcement officers in Sullivan County," Prozzo said. "All 15 towns and the county would use the range."

Commissioner Ethel Jarvis said she did not like the location of the proposed range near the state sheds on the 2nd New Hampshire Turnpike and suggested using an old gravel pit near the county cemetery.

"It's just not to me a very good location," Jarvis said. "Isn't there a better piece of property down by the cemetery?"

Prozzo said he was open to any suggestions from the commission.

"We're certainly willing to look at anything you'll support," Prozzo said.

Commissioner Jeff Barrette made a motion to allow Prozzo to speak with the four home owners adjacent to the turnpike property, which

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passed unanimously.

Prozzo then left the meeting to speak with the home owners and returned before the meeting ended.

"I spoke with the home owners and nobody came out and said no," Prozzo said. "Three of

the people shoot in their back yards now. I gave them the information so they could review it."

Barrette said a public hearing on the proposed range will be scheduled in the near future.

Prozzo said if the range is

approved, he expects to begin using it in the spring. The range would operate from April through October and be closed during nights and weekends with few exceptions.

"Once a year we would do a low-light fire," Prozzo said.